

Společenství Romů na Moravě and the Development of Advocacy Work

The organization offers leisure activities for children and adolescents. At the same time, it provides outreach social services for adults.

Thanks to the **OPZ+ No. 42 project**, the Brno team expanded with **an advocacy worker and a fundraiser**. Part-time positions were created at other branches for former volunteers, strengthening the organization's capacity and ensuring continuity in case of leadership transitions. The project implementation period is from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2025.

Key activities of the project:

- Creation of a website for the biweekly Romano hangos
- Education of employees and volunteers
- Advocacy work
- Networking

MAIN FINDINGS

PROJECT BENEFITS:

Thanks to the project, the organization has been able to focus not only on **direct work with clients but also on strategic development**.

The team has successfully expanded, and both staff and volunteers have been supported through **education and internal training**.

Thanks to the advocacy work of the team, **financial support for the International Romani Day has been secured**, although the conditions for funding remain uncertain.

The organization is also focused on **developing collaboration** with other organizations with similar goals.

PRINCIPLES OF RECRUITING NEW EMPLOYEES

The organization strives to ensure that its team is primarily made up of employees of Romani descent.

At the beginning, the focus is placed on education or a gradual transition into a part-time position.

Employees are provided with the opportunity to gain experience in managerial positions.

It is easier to find volunteers for working with children than employees for advocacy positions, where they more often encounter discriminatory practices.

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New staff members were hired in Hodonín and Šternberk. These were people the organization had already been working with, and the cooperation has now been formalized. They became platform members on small part-time contracts. The goal is to ensure that team leaders don't have to do everything themselves and to involve younger colleagues so they can gain experience and learn.

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(Executive Director of the organization)



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HUMAN RESOURCES

A few years ago, the organization's founder had to leave for health reasons. The team thus realizes **the need to ensure at least partial succession for the current leaders**, who are used to managing a wide range of tasks but **still do not have direct successors**.

Several former volunteers are now employed as part of the project. Both staff and volunteers regularly participate in accredited **courses and internal training**.

The team in Brno has expanded with two new employees who focus on **coordinating education, project management, and advocacy work**.

IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE

The team reflects that **internal development and advocacy work depend on continuous effort**, and therefore, in the two years of the project, they will only achieve part of their long-term goals.

The implementation team recognized that due to working with clients of Romani origin and employing workers of Romani origin, they **encounter behaviors that they perceive as discriminatory or racist**. According to the team's testimonies, this includes, for example, low financial support for branch operations or situations during advocacy work.

The Romani Community in Moravia also develops its advocacy work through **networking with other organizations**, such as Ara Art.

ADVOCACY WORK

A significant activity within the project is **advocacy work**. This includes, for example, discussions about co-financing International Romani Day. Staff at all locations are also involved in **community planning and meetings with the municipality**.



“It’s very difficult to find someone who would enjoy this kind of work. It takes a specific type of person – no one wants to work somewhere they’re not welcome and feel like an unwelcome outsider. It has to be someone with a lot of energy and strong motivation. They need to be smart, perceptive, and have a broad understanding of many things. That’s why it’s so hard to find someone like that and convince them to take on this role. It’s relatively easy to find a Roma person to lead a football club for kids – that’s enjoyable work. But this kind of advocacy work is exhausting and should be paid in gold.”

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(The Executive Director on the work of advocacy workers of Romani descent:



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